

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 0786

EXDIS

FOR EUR/WE FROM VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, VT
SUBJECT: VATICAN FOREIGN MINISTER CASAROLI'S VISIT TO U.S. -
BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

REF: ROME (77) 20294 AND (77) 19748

1. THE FOLLOWING ARE SUBJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WHICH
MAY COME UP FOR DISCUSSION DURING VATICAN FOREIGN MINISTER
AGOSTINO CASAROLI'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON JANUARY 26-27.

2. SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO THE VATICAN.

A. EAST-WEST RELATIONS: CASAROLI, THE ARCHITECT OF THE
VATICAN'S OSTPOLITIK, WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING US
VIEWS ON THE COURSE OF THE PROCESS OF DETENTE, THE
STATUS OF THE SALT TALKS, AND THE U.S. POSTURE FOR THE
SECOND PHASE OF THE BELGRADE CSCE CONFERENCE. CASAROLI
MAY ALSO SHOW INTEREST IN U.S. VIEWS ON THE NEUTRON BOMBJQ
WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT'S ENVOY TO THE VATICAN
(ROME 513). INTEREST DERIVES FROM SOVIET AND OTHER
INQUIRIES ON WHY THE POPE HAS NOT DENOUNCED THE
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DEVELOPMENT OF THIS WEAPON.

B. EUROCOMMUNISM: THE VATICAN HAS OPPOSED THE
QUOTE HISTORIC COMPROMISE UNQUOTE FORMULA FOR ITALY
AND HAS BEEN APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A
MARXIST VICTORY IN FRANCE, WHICH WOULD BRING COMMUNISTS
IN THE GOVERNING PROCESS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. IT

SEES ITALY'S AND EUROPE'S SALVATION FROM MARXISM THROUGH PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND HAS THEREFORE BEEN A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF EUROPEAN UNITY. IN THIS CONTEXT, VATICAN WELCOMED PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION. THE VATICAN CONTINUES ITS KEEN INTEREST IN U.S. POLICY ON EUROCOMMUNISM (SEE ALSO PARA 3A).

C. US-PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CTRNA RELATIONS: VATICAN HAS BEEN INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING CONTACT WITH THE PRC AND HAS BEEN SEARCHING FOR OPPORTUNE TIMING AND FOR THE BEST MEANS FOR DOING IT. VATICAN HAS SENT MANY PUBLIC AND SOME PRIVATE SIGNALS TO THE PRC FOR SUCH CONTACTS--IN THE FORM OF PAPAL STATEMENTS OF INTEREST IN CHINA, AND IN HAVING ITS NUNCIATURA IN TAIWAN RUN BY A CHARGE' AND NOT THE NUNCIO FOR THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS. VATICAN HAS HAD A RECENT HINT THROUGH VIENNA CONTACTS, THAT THE PRC IS STUDYING THE ISSUE OF CONTACTS AND THAT ISSUE WILL BE ULTIMATELY DECIDED BY A PRC ASSESSMENT OF DEGREE TO WHICH VATICAN PROMOTES EUROPEAN UNITY AND OPPOSES USSR OBJECTIVES IN WESTERN EUROPE. CASAROLI IS AT THE CENTER OF THE VATICAN SEARCH FOR CONTACTS WITH THE PRC AND WOULD BE INTERESTED IN U.S. ASSESSMENT OF THE NATURE OF CURRENT HIGH LEVEL PRC LEADERSHIP AND THE DIRECTION OF THE PRC FOREIGN POLICIES.

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D. MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS: THE VATICAN HAS SUPPORTED U.S. PEACE EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND LEBANON AND HAS APPRECIATED PERIODIC U.S. BRIEFINGS AND CONSULTATIONS. RECENTLY, THE VATICAN HAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED PRESIDENT SADAT'S INITIATIVES FOR PEACE AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE FOLLOWING: (1) POPE PAUL WAS ONE OF THE FIRST WORLD LEADERS TO PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE SUPPORT FOR SADAT'S TRIP TO JERUSALEM (FOLLOWING A TIMELY U.S. DEMARCHE ON THE SUBJECT); (2) SUPPORT FOR CAIRO CONFERENCE BY SENDING A SPECIAL EMISSARY; AND (3) SEVERAL YEAR-END STATEMENTS BY THE POPE IN SUPPORT OF NEGOTIATING PROCESS. VATICAN INTEREST IN MIDDLE EAST WAS HIGHLIGHTED JANUARY 12 BY THE POPE'S MEETING WITH ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN. OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE VATICAN ARE SUCH ISSUES AS A QUOTE HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS, UNQUOTE (WHICH IN ITS VIEW IS RELATED NOT ONLY TO THE OVERALL SETTLEMENT, BUT ALSO TO LASTING INTERNAL PEACE FOR LEBANON) AND A QUOTE SPECIAL STATUTE UNQUOTE FOR JERUSALEM AND THE HOLY PLACES (SEE ALSO PARA 3E).

3. ISSUES OF U.S. INTEREST.

A. THE VATICAN AND ITALY: THE CURRENT ITALIAN
POLITICAL DEBATE, ENGENDERED BY VARIOUS CALLS FOR AN
INCREASED ROLE OF THE PCI IN THE GOVERNING PROCESS,
HAS DISTURBED THE VATICAN AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.
BOTH HAVE RENEWED THEIR TRADITIONAL DECLARATIONS ON
THE QUOTE IRRECONCILABILITY UNQUOTE OF CHRISTIANITY
AND MARXISM AND HAVE CALLED ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS
TO RESIST THE QUOTE HISTORIC COMPROMISE. UNQUOTE.
PERHAPS BECAUSE OF HIS INTENSE ACTIVITIES IN SEARCHING
FOR GREATER LIBERALIZATION TOWARD THE CHURCH IN EASTERN
EUROPE, CASAROLI IS REGARDED BY MANY AS AN OPPONENT
WITHIN THE VATICAN OF A HARDLINE AGAINST THE PCI
IN ITALY. THIS POINT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND BY USG
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OFFICIALS WHO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE HIM IN
WASHINGTON AND HIS AND THE VATICAN'S ATTITUDES
TOWARD THE PCI SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY AND CAREFULLY
EXPLORED. IN ADDITION, WASHINGTON MAY WISH TO OBTAIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 0786

EXDIS

FOR EUR/WE FROM VATICAN OFFICE

CASAROLI'S VIEWS ON TWO CURRENT CHURCH-STATE ISSUES:
THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE REVISION OF THE 1929
CONCORDAT (WHICH APPEAR STALLED) AND THE PENDING
ABORTION LEGISLATION (WHICH, IF UNRESOLVED BY

PARLIAMENT, COULD BE THE SUBJECT OF A REFERENDUM
IN MAY-JUNE 1978).

B. THE VATICAN AND HELSINKI: AT BELGRADE THE VATICAN
TOOK A STRONGER POSITION THAN EXPECTED FOR QUOTE MORE
UNQUOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN PROVISIONS
OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. WE BELIEVE TWO FACTORS
CONTRIBUTED IN STRENGTHENING THE VATICAN'S RESOLVE:

--VOICES OF CONVERN ABOUT RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
BY PRELATES FROM EASTERN EUROPE IN THE
SYNOD OF BISHOPS (ROME, OCT. '77) WHICH IT COULD
NOT IGNORE, AND

--CONSULTATIONS WITH U.S., PARTICULARLY THOSE
BETWEEN AMBASSADOR GOLDBERG AND CASAROLI WHICH
DEMONSTRATED AMERICAN DETERMINATION TO BE
FORCEFUL WHILE AVOIDING CONFRONTATION.

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U.S. OFFICIALS MAY WISH TO CONTINUE OUR DIALOGUE ON
THE CSCE PROCESS BY SEEKING AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT FROM
CASAROLI, WHO HAS BEEN THE KEY FORMULATOR OF THE VATICAN'S
COMMUNIST REGIMES FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS.

C. VATICAN AND EAST EUROPE: THE VATICAN HAS HAD
CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS IN OBTAINING ADDITIONAL BREATHING
SPACE FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND AND HUNGARY,
SYMBOLIZED BY THE POPE'S PRIVATE AUDIENCES TO POLISH
COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF GIEREK (DECEMBER 1) AND TO
HUNGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF KADAR (JUNE 9). THE
VATICAN MAY BE PLANNING ADDITIONAL BREAKTHROUGHS IN
RELATIONS WITH THESE TWO COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. CASAROLI
IS IN A POSITION TO OUTLINE THE FUTURE COURSE OF
RELATIONS WITH HUNGARY AND POLAND AS WELL AS TO
COMMENT ON THE OBSTACLES STANDING IN THE WAY OF BETTER
VATICAN RELATIONS WITH EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
THE VATICAN HAS NO SPECIAL PROBLEMS WITH BULGARIA
AND IT SEEMS TO BE ENGAGED IN A NEGOTIATING PROCESS
WITH ROMANIA WHICH WILL RESOLVE MOST OF THE EXISTING
CHURCH-STATE ISSUES, EXCEPT THE STATUS OF THE UNIATE
CHURCH WHICH WAS FORCEFULLY INCORPORATED IN THE ORTHODOX
CHURCH AFTER WORLD WAR II. (CASAROLI WAS PARTICULARLY
HELPFUL DURING THE CONSULTATIONS WEIELD FOR THE
RETURN OF THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN TO HUNGARY. HE
WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN TELLING CERTAIN AMERICAN PRELATES
THAT THE VATICAN HAS BEEN CONSULTED AND INTERPOSED
NO OBJECTIONS.)

D. HUMAN RIGHTS: VATICAN OFFICIALS STRONGLY SUPPORT THE HUMAN RIGHTS EMPHASIS IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY. THE VATICAN AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ARE ESPECIALLY ENGAGED
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ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA (E.G. RHODESIA, SOUTH AFRICA) AND LATIN AMERICA (E.G. CHILE, BRAZIL). CARAROLI IS ESPECIALLY TUNED-IN TO DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD (HIS CONVICTION STRENGTHENED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CHURCH IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL WHERE CHURCH WAS ON THE SIDE OF LIBERALIZATION DURING THE PAST DECADE) AND HIS VIEWS ARE OF INTEREST TO THE U.S.

E. VATICAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST: IN ADDITION TO OBTAINING THE VATICAN'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE COURSE OF MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WHICH

--(1) TO NOTE THAT VATICAN PAPER WHICH WAS GIVEN TO THE U.S. DELGATION DURING THE CAIRO CONFERENCE (DECEMBER 15) BY THE VATICAN'S SPECIAL EMISSARY MADE REFERENCE TO JERUSALEM, STATING THAT THE VATICAN WANTED A QUOTE SPECIAL STATUTE COVERED BY INTERNATIONAL QUARANTEES UNQUOTE; (2) TO ASK CASAROLI TO ELUCIDATE FURTHER THE VATICAN POSITION ON THIS POINT AND WHETHER HE FORESEES VATICAN CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES ON THE ISSUE. (WITH RESPECT TO JERUSALEM, POPE PAUL TOLD VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE ON JANUARY 27, 1977, THAT THE VATICAN ACQUIESCED IN USG REQUEST TO REFRAIN FROM PRESSING THE ISSUE DURING THE STEP-BY-STEP NEGOTIATION ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WHEN THE US CONSIDERED ISSUE RIPE FOR NEGOTIATIONS IT WOULD CONSULT CLOSELY WITH THE VATICAN.)
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